

### **REMARKS**

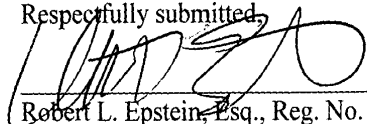
Claims 11, 15, 16 and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Stock et al. in view of Moeller and further in view of Harstead et al. Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Stock, Moeller, Harstead and further in view of Johnson et al. Claims 13 and 17 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Stock, Moeller, Harstead and further in view of Bai. Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stock, Moeller, Harstead, Bai and further in view of Johnson. Claim 19 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stock in view and Harstead. Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Bai.

None of the references, whether considered individually or in combination, teach a spreader or compensation module which includes a fiber of the high order mode type or a fiber of the super large area type. As explained in the specification (see page 13), lines 14-28 and page 4, lines 38-36) the high order mode and super large area fibers are preferred fibers for avoiding non-linear effects, as provided by the invention.

Accordingly, independent claims 11, 16, 19 and 20 have been amended to require that the modules comprise such fibers so as to distinguish over the references. Claims 13-15 dependent upon claim 11, and claims 17 and 18, dependent upon claim 16, are believed to distinguish over the references for the same reason that the claims from which

they depend.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert L. Epstein', is written over a horizontal line.

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